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Denver Rocky Mountain News

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April 26, 1999 • InsideDenver.com

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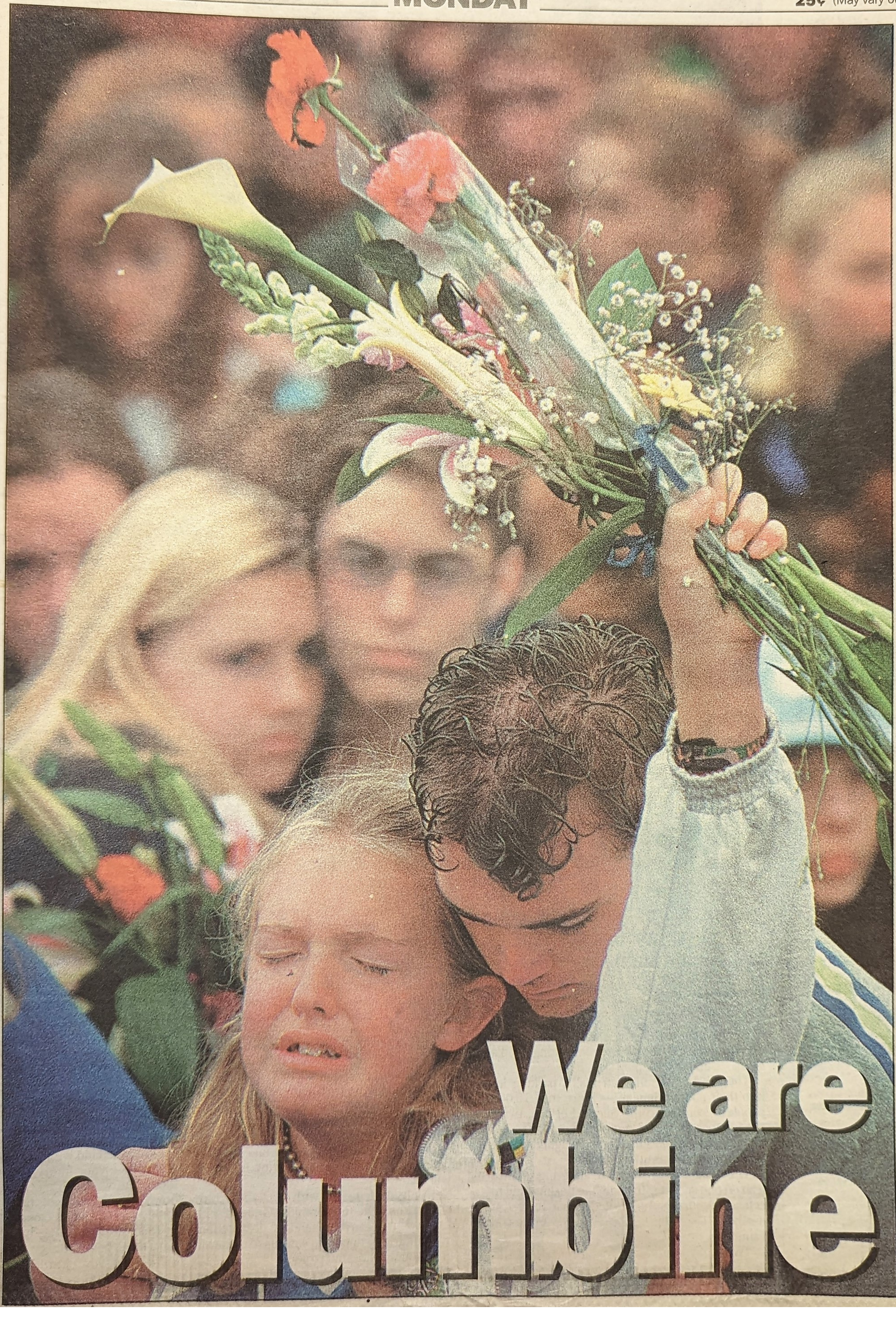

We are Columbine

Dale Napoletano, 16, hugs his sister LeighAnn, 13, during Sunday's memorial service honoring the victims of the Columbine attack. An estimated 70,000 people, including Vice President Al Gore, attended.

2A

Patrick Davison
News Staff
Photographer

'Coach Sanders, I love you, I will miss you'

COLUMBINE from **2A**

Columbine High School. Through all of the pain, one thing is clear: This community will not be beaten."

At the end of the service, four fighter jets roared overhead. One plane, flown by Capt. Scott Van Beek, a 1986 Columbine graduate and a pilot with the Colorado Air National Guard, peeled away in a salute to the dead.

Thirteen doves fluttered into the sky after them, one for each of the slaying victims: Cassie and Steven. Corey and Kelly. Matthew, Daniel, Dan and Rachel. Isaiah, John, Lauren and Kyle. And one for Mr. Sanders.

"Coach Sanders, I love you and I will miss you," senior Amber Burgess told the crowd. "I know that each day your memory will push me to become a better person and live my life to its fullest."

Some listened to her, standing alone with dark circles under their eyes. Others formed tight groups and prayed. Red-eyed couples entwined like strands of rope. Parents hugged their children like they never would again.

So many of them drained and dazed.

"I'm so numb," said Debbie Bowman.

And with that, she spoke for them all.

News staff writers Brian Weber, Tustin Amole, Carla Crowder and M.E. Sprengelmeyer contributed to this report.

'Evil genius' and 'Eddie Haskell'

BROWNS from **5A**

That night, Wayne Harris called.

"He said his son was afraid of me and that's why he was hanging on the door handle," Judy Brown said. "I said, 'Your son's not afraid. Your son is terrifying. Your son is violent.' "

Eric Harris came over to apologize, but Judy Brown thought it was an act.

"I told my husband later that this is the Eddie Haskell of Columbine," she said, referring to the smarmy character on *Leave It to Beaver*.

"He went through this whole spiel, how it was all in fun. I said, 'Eric Harris, you can pull the wool over your dad's eyes, but you're not going to pull the wool over my eyes.' "

She told Harris if she ever saw him near her house again she would call police.

"I said, 'Stay away from my kids.' I just had a feeling about him at this point. The way he was yelling."

Shortly afterward, Brown said, they got a copy of an e-mail from Harris that detailed how he had managed to pull a fast one on his dad.

The Browns tried to put their trouble with Harris behind them. But then a student at Columbine told Brooks Brown about Harris' Web page. Brown wouldn't tell his mother who had tipped him off.

"He said, 'I can't tell you who it is, Mom, because he's afraid that Eric Harris will harm him," Judy Brown said.

The Browns didn't learn until after the shooting the name of the tipster: Dylan Klebold.

"In retrospect, this might have been a cry for help," Randy Brown said.

What the Browns read on the Web page terrified them.

I am the law, if you don't like it, you die. If I don't like you or I don't like what you want me to do, you die. God I can't wait till I can kill you people.

Twelve pages from a lunatic, including a threat against their son.

Harris had created a level of Doom, a computer game, based in the Browns' neighborhood. The target was the Browns' house.

The Jefferson County Sheriff's Department sent a deputy out, but he said he didn't know enough about the Internet and referred them to a detective.

The Browns downloaded the information, took it to sheriff's headquarters in Golden and met with a detective and an officer on the bomb squad.

Then they went home and started sleeping with a baseball bat by their side.

When the Browns called to ask about the investigation, they were told there was no record of the complaint. It apparently had been lost.

They went to the sheriff's office again, on March 31, 1998. This time they had six more pages showing that Harris was making and exploding pipe bombs with "Vodka," Klebold's nickname. They met with a detective.

"He was telling us this was the worst case he has seen on a computer," Judy Brown said.

But the detective cautioned that the postings might be protected by the First Amendment. He didn't know if the teen-ager had broken laws. And because Harris was only 16 at the time, the detective couldn't discuss much about the boy.

"He said, 'Let me go see if there's a file on this kid,' " Judy Brown recalled.

The detective returned with a printout showing that Eric Harris had been arrested two months earlier for breaking into a car.

The Browns assumed that the juvenile officers handling the break-in would receive copies of their complaint.

That never happened.

The next day, Judy Brown was in a supermarket when she saw Harris in line. He was buying *Rifle* magazine. She rushed home and left a frantic phone message for the detective.

"I said, 'This guy is active. Will you call and let me know if you're looking into this?' "

She said she repeatedly called the detective. Her husband also called. They never heard back, although the dispatcher always sent patrols when they called and said they were afraid of Harris.

The Browns felt powerless. They didn't know where to turn. Their one comfort, Judy Brown said, was that Dylan Klebold was Eric Harris' best friend.

She didn't think Klebold was capable of violence.

One night this year at the dinner table, Brooks Brown made a startling announcement. He and Harris had "buried the hatchet."

"He said, 'He's changed,' " Judy Brown said. "I said, 'Stay away from him. It's a trick.' "

Killers may have had school keys

By Jeff Kass
News Staff Writer

JEFFERSON COUNTY — Jefferson County School District officials are looking into whether the two Columbine High School shooters had keys to the school, the lead investigator said Sunday.

Jefferson County Sheriff's Deputy John Kiekbusch said officials have received reports that Eric Harris, 17, and Dylan Klebold, 18, had keys that helped them prepare for Tuesday's shooting.

Kiekbusch said school officials are taking the lead on the investigation because police are giving top priority to finding accomplices.

There have been tips that the two had keys to the schools, but Kiekbusch did not have details.

He added that the two may not have needed keys to carry out their attack. They could have planted bombs, for example, when the school was open for an after-prom party last weekend.

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Cyrus McCrimmon/News Staff Photographer

Randy and Judy Brown and their older son, Brooks, talk about details they gave to police a year ago about Eric Harris, one of the gunmen in the Columbine High School shootings. Brooks Brown said Harris had threatened him.

A trail of frustration

Harris' neighbors repeatedly alerted sheriff's office to his menacing behavior, to no avail

By Lynn Bartels
News Staff Writer

Randy and Judy Brown can't count the times they called the Jefferson County sheriff about Eric Harris. But they know how many times detectives called back:

Zero.

The Browns, who live several blocks from the Harris family, told detectives that they believed Harris and his friend, Dylan Klebold, were exploding homemade pipe bombs. They also reported that Harris had threatened mayhem on Internet postings, after which he was seen buying a gun publication.

Nobody followed up, they said.

That was a year ago. A year before Harris and Klebold killed 12 students and a teacher at Columbine High School.

"They knew about it ahead of time, and they're on TV blaming the parents and everybody else when they're the ones who dropped the ball," Randy Brown said.

The Browns talked publicly Sunday for the first time about their two-year ordeal with Harris, a young man they alternately described as an "evil genius" and "the Eddie Haskell of Columbine."

Randy Brown, 46, is a real-estate agent. Judy Brown, 49, is a homemaker. Their sons, Brooks, 17, and Aaron, 15, attend Columbine.

The Browns told the *Denver Rocky Mountain News* and Channel 4 that people need to know of their frantic efforts to get Jefferson County to do something.

Klebold

Harris

The sheriff's office has acknowledged that it received a complaint, but District Attorney Dave Thomas said last week it was never forwarded to his office.

Sheriff John Stone on Saturday said investigators found the sawed-off barrel of a shotgun on a dresser in one gunman's bedroom. They also discovered pipe bombs and bomb-making materials in the room.

"A lot of this stuff was lying out, very visible, in the house," Stone said. "The parents should have been aware of it."

Brooks Brown said Harris had always tried to hide his criminal activity from his parents. He thinks Harris probably left the evidence on his dresser Tuesday because he knew he was not coming back.

"His parents, they were good with him," he said. "They would have noticed that. Eric is an evil genius, I guess, really conniving but brilliant."

The Browns complained to Wayne and Kathy Harris about their son.

"His dad did talk to him. It's not like his dad just glossed it over. His mother was listening, crying," Judy Brown said. "I think that's important to know. They wanted to make it right."

The Browns said their problems with Harris began in 1997. One night, someone toilet-papered a house in their neighborhood, set a bush on fire and Superglued door handles.

Eric Harris blamed Brooks Brown. Judy Brown knew her son was home that night because he had been grounded.

The Browns told a sheriff's deputy that they suspected Harris. As a result, authorities warned the Harrises that their son needed to be watched.

"This made Eric very upset," Judy Brown said.

One day at school — Judy Brown is not certain of the date — Harris began talking about vandalizing Brooks Brown's car. The same day, Harris threw a chunk of ice at the car, chipping the windshield.

A student who witnessed the incident saw Harris set his backpack down. The witness took it to Judy Brown, who drove down the block and confronted Eric, telling him she had his backpack and was going to see his mother.

"He was furious. He grabbed onto the window. He turned bright red. He was crazy," Judy Brown said.

Kathy Harris cried when she learned what had happened. Later that day, Brooks Brown that day told Kathy Harris that her son had been slipping out of the house at night and setting off firecrackers in the neighborhood.

See **BROWNS** on **42A**

'(The Klebolds) accept the fact that their son did this and they know they are going to have to face the world. They think the world hates them.'

Judy Brown, family friend

Klebolds never knew, friend says

By Lynn Bartels
News Staff Writer

No one from Columbine High School ever told the Klebolds their son had a problem.

No one mentioned the dark poems, the outcast behavior, the violent video their son apparently made, showing him and his best friend shooting up the school.

By the time Sue and Tom Klebold knew their son was troubled, the whole world knew, too.

Investigators now say the diabolical plan hatched by Dylan Klebold and Eric Harris had been in the works for a year.

But the Klebolds have told their friends, including Judy Brown, that they didn't have a clue.

"I have been with the Klebolds, and I will tell you they are devastated," Judy Brown said Sunday.

"They accept the fact that their son did this and they know they are going to have to face the world.

"They think the world hates them."

A year ago, Brown gave a Jefferson County sheriff's detective pages filled with violent rantings from Harris' Web site. Harris wrote that he and "Vodka" were setting off pipe bombs.

Brown said she told the detective that "Vodka" was Dylan, but the detective never followed up.

She didn't tell Sue Klebold because she wanted authorities to handle the situation.

Sue Klebold has since told Brown that no one from the sheriff's office ever called.

Brown has known the family for years. Her sons were friends with Dylan, 17, and his older brother Bryan, 19.

Dylan Klebold was a quiet child who rarely raised his voice, Brown said.

"He was the easy child," she said.

Sue Klebold told Brown that she was shocked at news reports saying some teachers had complained about Harris and her son to the administration.

"She said, 'Why didn't they call me? In grade school, they call you. They let you know when they see these weird poems.' She said the teachers never informed her of this behavior," Brown said.

Brown said her friend is stung that the world perceives her as a rich, Jewish woman who failed as a parent.

"She is not at all like that. She doesn't even wear makeup," Brown said. "This is a woman that is totally unaware of the other side of her son. This is not the son she knew."

Dylan Klebold gave no indication he was on a suicide mission, Brown said. He had visited a college in Arizona he planned to attend in the fall to study computer science. He couldn't wait.

His mother had gone to Columbine with other parents March 30 to get information for graduation night.

Sue Klebold and Brown spent that night catching up and talking about Dylan.

"She said Dylan was pulling everything together," Brown said. "Everything was going great for Dylan."

Howard Stern and Denver

THE ISSUE: Radio personality jokes at expense of Columbine massacre

OUR VIEW: His on-air presence in Denver is an affront

Three years ago, two disk jockeys at KBPI-FM invaded a house of worship — a mosque — in an ignorant play for laughs. They were suspended from their jobs.

A few weeks ago, a syndicated Washington-area shock jock joked about the Texas dragging death of James Byrd. Doug "The Greaseman" Tracht was summarily fired.

Just last week, in Charlotte, N.C., a radio talk show host lost his job after making a lame wisecrack about the Columbine High School killings.

Meanwhile, Howard Stern remains on the air in Denver.

Why?

As the *News'* Dusty Saunders reported Saturday, Stern believes that even the murders at Columbine are fair game for his vulgar wit.

"There were, like, really good-looking girls running out with their hands over their heads," he told his syndicated audience last week, an audience that includes listeners of KXPK-FM (96.5).

"Did those kids (the killers) try to have sex with any of the good-looking girls? They didn't even do that?

"At least if you're going to kill yourself and kill all the kids, why wouldn't you have some sex?"

Stern had one last quip, too, which didn't appear in Saunders' column: "I mean, if I was going to kill some people, I'd take them out with sex."

Not only did station executives fail to yank Stern's show, the general manager actually delivered an on-air lecture to those who'd called in to complain. Yes, Stern "crossed the line in certain areas," Bob Visotcky acknowledged, but the shock jock mustn't be judged "by one or two inappropriate comments."

Then Visotcky launched into his homily. "Rather than looking for somebody to attack all the time," he suggested, "why don't we start writing letters. If somebody, if your neighbor did something nice for you or for your family, send them a note, call them up on the phone and tell them, 'You did something right,' instead of always looking for negatives to attack with. . ."

"Put your arms around people, embrace people, tell everybody you love each other instead of what you hate and what you don't like. That's what I think we need to work on. All of us."

Visotcky continued in this pompous vein, praising the various good works of Chancellor Media Corp. (as if they were in doubt) and noting his employees' community ties (as if they weren't self-evident) before serving up his final platitudes.

"We are all trying to help in any way we can," he said. "So let's focus on the positives rather than attacking."

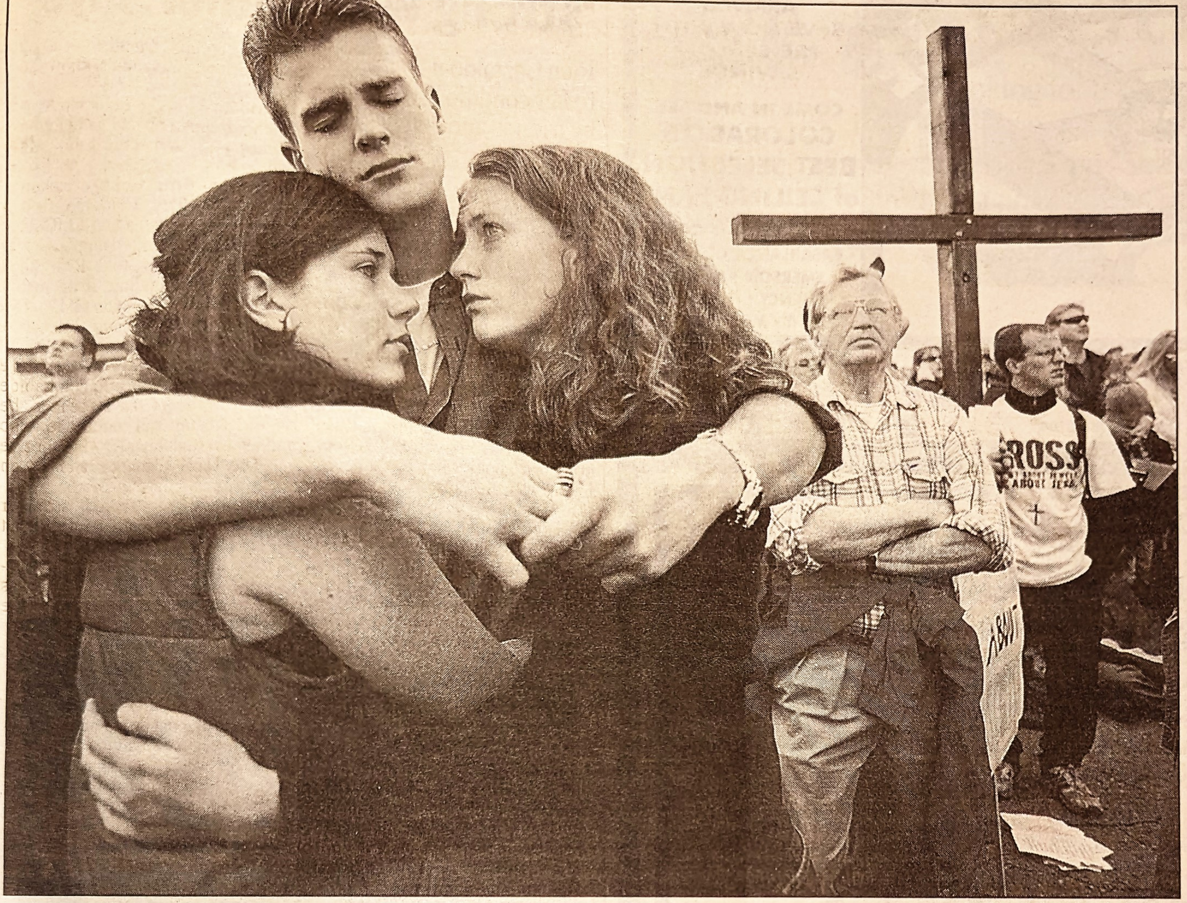
Sorry, but everyone is *not* trying to help in every possible way. If Visotcky really wanted to help, for example, he'd have canceled Stern's show. It is the one meaningful contribution he might have offered to a stricken community, but one that apparently was too much to expect.

No, we are not blaming Howard Stern for what happened at Columbine, as Visotcky so artlessly accused his station's critics during his radio address. We are simply saying that the crude, pointless exploitation of tragedy for humor is — or ought to be — beyond the pale in the commercial media. You should have a very good reason before you decide to laugh at the expense of grieving people. Offhand, we can't think of one.

Visotcky may not be aware of it, but the Columbine massacre has prompted a nationwide debate about the popular culture, and specifically whether TV, films, video games and youth music nurture a nihilistic disregard for life. Is it any wonder that many people believe this is the case, when even the death of children is now grist for a few cheap laughs by a celebrity of Stern's vast reach?

Nor was this the first time Stern used murder as a foil for his wit. After the singer Selena was shot and killed, he played her music with the sound of mock gunfire reverberating in the background. His point: "Spanish people have the worst taste in music."

Either we are serious about showing respect for the dead and their families or we aren't. Either we care about the quality of our culture or we don't. Let Howard Stern make his millions in other broadcast markets. He does not belong in Denver.



Marc Piscotty/News Staff Photographer

Jon Stranske, 19, hugs Shana Dinner, 17, left, and Lee Evans, 15, at a memorial service for the victims of the Columbine High School shootings. At religious services throughout the Denver area, people gathered to come to grips with last week's violence at the school.

Church bells ring out message of hope across stricken city

Jean Torkelson

How Coloradans Worship

After the rampage, faith struck back.

It happened Sunday at 7 a.m. Mass, where a Catholic community has lost two children and has two more hospitalized.

It happened down the road with a church family of mainline Protestants, who have one child recovering.

It happened as Christian Evangelicals worshiped shoulder to shoulder in a place with newly sinister connotations — a suburban school gymnasium.

And it happened at Denver's Baha'i Center, home to a Persian religion dedicated to finding world peace, but which struggled Sunday to make sense of what happened in Colorado.

The prevailing message was that God and faith itself came under attack at Columbine High.

One girl, Cassie Bernall, had been killed after saying she believed in God.

The Rev. Ken Leone told his Sunday flock at St. Frances Cabrini Church that survivor Valeen Schnurr told him from her hospital bed that she, too, was shot by a laughing gunman when she said she believed in God.

In coming weeks, Leone said, "Psychologists, police, sociologists will all add two cents about why this happened, but in another sense, the cause is very simple — we are losing God.

"Complete contempt for human life in the young is not an accident. It's what we create when we live a contradiction. We cannot systematically kill the unborn, the infirm, those in prisons, glorify brutality and then expect our children to build a culture of life."

For parishioner Marge Barry, brutality has a personal touch.

Some years ago, her daughter-in-law was murdered by an intruder. Last week her granddaughter, Brittany, hid in Columbine High School for four hours after the carnage.

"I just think we need to do something to get prayer back in schools," Barry said. "God is alive in this country, and we need to make a stand for him. We have to let kids experience their faith."

At Columbine United Church, the Rev. Steve Poos-Benson, with deliberate, terrible precision, read a condition report on a young parishioner: "Patrick Ireland is a young man who fell out of the window, shot once in the head, once in the foot."

Ireland was the church's only victim — "Only *physical* victim," corrected member George Kinner, in a whisper.

Others were in pain, too.

"I woke up Saturday in a fit of rage," Poos-Benson said. "I was shoveling snow, but I didn't really have to shovel it because it was melting around me."

Under the irony of rainbow-colored Easter banners, Poos-Benson greeted visiting supporters, including United Methodist Bishop Mary Ann Swenson, the Rev. Lucia Guzman of the Council of Churches and other dignitaries.

The sad pageantry of mourning filled the vestibule. Flowers. Cards. Messages from all over the world. Even T-shirts selling for $10. Mid-service, Kinner abruptly walked to the vestibule, grabbed a T-shirt and put it on under his tweed jacket.

"In support," he explained, his voice breaking.

Several miles away, a roll call of the dead resonated through the gymnasium at Trailblazer Elementary School in Highlands Ranch.

A bell tolled for each victim as the flock at Castlewood Evangelical Free Church stood silently, surrounded by basketball hoops and cheery crayon cutouts.

Late last week, the Rev. Tim Andersen had scrapped a long-planned sermon on the effects of Y2K. Those once-dire prospects seemed, well, almost cartoonish compared to the question, "How can the heart of a 17-, 18-year-old dream up this horrific thing?"

For clues, Andersen, 49, saw links to days of long hair, rebellion, and the battle cry of his generation: "Do your own thing."

"This wasn't an attack against jocks, minorities and people who make others feel uncomfortable," Andersen said. "The reality is this stubborn resistance is toward God himself. God's morality, his desires are seen as restraints. The world itself is responding — 'Hey, I want to do what I want to do.'

And last Tuesday, killing was what two teens wanted to do.

Miles away near downtown Denver, members of the Baha'i faith meditated during a service that, ironically, had been dedicated beforehand to children.

"This is a spiritual disease we are seeing," said the Iranian-born Shahrokh Sadighian. "The biggest challenge for America is racial harmony. I think God has chosen America as a testing tube for the whole world, for living in harmony.

"We have learned to accept each other, but not to really *love* one another. Until we spiritually transform ourselves, peace will not happen."

As if to underline the vulnerability of childhood, 7-year-old Crystal Hoffman bounced to the microphone and, without accompaniment, sang a song in a high, clear voice.

Then Linda Pomeroy rose to read the counsels from the early, 18th century founders of Baha'i. On Sunday they sounded eerily prescient.

"Take the utmost care to give your children high ideals and goals," she read, "so that they will not be defiled by passion . . . and be harmful to others."

Second girl also faced death after professing belief in God

Columbine High School victim Cassie Bernall faced what is being called Christian martyrdom with at least one other teen, Valeen Schnurr.

The difference is, Schnurr survived.

The Rev. Ken Leone told his congregation Sunday at St. Francis Cabrini Catholic Church that during a hospital visit, Schnurr told him about her confrontation with one of the gunmen.

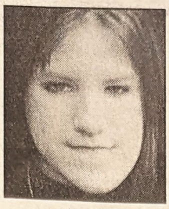
"When he pointed the gun at me," Leone quoted Schnurr as saying, "he said, 'Do you believe in God?' I said 'yes' and he looked at me and laughed and said, 'Why?' and then he shot me."

— Jean Torkelson

TRAGEDY AT COLUMBINE

IN MEMORY OF

KELLY FLEMING



DANIEL MAUSER

'May they live radiant and forever young'

Steven R. Nickerson/News Staff Photographer

Dee Dee and Don Fleming comfort daughter Erin while viewing the casket of daughter Kelly Ann, who was killed at Columbine High School.

By James B. Meadow

News Staff Writer

He was the All-American Boy and she was the Girl Next Door.

And family and friends who once held their breath in anticipation of what they would someday accomplish could only sigh and weep over two lives gone forever.

Kelly Ann Fleming, 16, and Daniel Conner Mauser, 15, two of the 12 students who fell prey to the madness at Columbine High School, shared a funeral Sunday as 1,800 mourners — 500 of them standing — filled St. Frances Cabrini Catholic Church in Littleton.

They knelt, wept, prayed and tried to make sense of the senseless, listening as Archbishop Charles J. Chaput called out to God, "May they live radiant and forever young in the happiness of your kingdom."

Chaput's presence as principal celebrant of the Mass of Christian Burial was requested by Ken Leone and Jerry Rohr, pastors of the Cabrini and Light of the World parishes, where the Mausers and Flemings worshipped, respectively.

In fact, under other circumstances, Daniel would have been attending the weekly Mass where he had been confirmed and where he belonged to a teen group.

Instead, the boy who ran cross country, belonged to the debate team and would rake leaves for neighbors just to be nice lay in a brown coffin, dressed in a jacket and tie, eyeglasses on his face. Next to him, in a slate-blue coffin, lay Kelly, two teddy bears in her arms.

Before the service, as the nine-piece Life Teen Band played *Spirit Breathe On Me*, mourners walked heavily past the open coffins. Suits, dresses, jeans, letter jackets, sweatshirts, police uniforms — it didn't matter what they wore — everyone had the same wet-eyed look.

Here was flaxen-haired Daniel, utterly boyish, with a megawatt smile. In one photograph, he and his father wore Groucho Marx masks as they sat on the couch. There was Kelly, a shy girl, mouth turned into that crooked smile, eyes intense. As if she were peering into a future she couldn't quite see yet.

"She was really quiet; she didn't like to answer questions in algebra class," said Regina Evans, a classmate. "But everyone liked her. There was just no reason not to."

Chaput noted that Kelly liked to write short stories that "started with sorrow and depression but moved on to happiness and safety." He paused and then said, "This last chapter of her life began with sorrow and depression, but we hope that the story ends with safety and happiness."

Although there were no eulogies offered, Daniel's mother and Kelly's godfather each read from the gospel. And during his homily, Chaput noted, "We were all cut to the heart by what happened."

"Ours is a culture permeated by violence. We *need* to be cut to the heart so that we might work for changes in our society. . . . We are not powerless. We can convert the structures of our society."

Chaput told the families: "Tuesday was your descent into hell. I don't know how else we can describe it as any less than that."

"How could an all-loving God allow your daughter and son to die this way? We don't have an answer. But we have a response. God didn't hold his only begotten son from suffering on the cross. God has experienced what you have experienced. This is not an answer, but it tells us God is with us . . . he has walked this way and walks this way again with us."

Punctuating the reading from the Scriptures and Chaput's remarks was the music of the Life Teen Band, which tinged hymns and contemporary music with devotion and joy that seemed to lift the mourners spirits.

Particularly moving was the performance of Israel, a Tennessee-based contemporary Christian singer who flew in for the funeral and sang an original song with this stanza: "Sometimes I think that heaven was way too anxious / Because you were gone way before your time."

After communion, many in the audience hugged fiercely, seeking, it seemed, to both give and draw strength.

As the funeral came to an end, sunlight poured through the window and lighted the room in an eerie incandescence as Chaput said, "Daniel and Kelly, may the angels lead you into paradise and may the martyrs come to welcome you."

Then, slowly, the mourners began filing out into the dusk with the hope that Daniel and Kelly were on their way to a new dawn.

WHERE TO DONATE

Individual survivors

- The Patrick Ireland and Family Fund, c/o Northwest United Federal Credit Union, 6320 Old Wadsworth Blvd., P.O. Box 547, Arvada, CO 80001
- The Lance Kirklin Columbine High School Victim Survivors Fund; donations may be made at any First Bank or sent to First Bank, CO 80161.

  Also, the Lance Kirklin Support Fund, c/o Everen Securities, 8005 S. Chester St., Suite 300, Englewood, CO 80112. Attention: Bret Roberts. Information: (303) 925-8500 or (800) 300-9648.
- Citywide Bank has created a healing fund and individual funds for Isaiah Shoels and Lance Kirklin. (303) 365-3673. Drop off donations at any of the seven Citywide locations, or mail them to P.O. Box 128, Aurora, CO 80040.

Memorial funds

- The Steven R. Curnow Memorial Fund, c/o First Bank, P.O. Box 2297, Littleton.
- Kelly Fleming memorial donations, Jefferson County Victim Advocates, c/o Jefferson County Sheriff's Office, 200 Jefferson County Parkway, Golden, CO 80401.
- Daniel Mauser memorial donations, Foundation for Children and Aging, 1 Elmwood Ave., Kansas City, KS 66103.
- Dan Rohrbough memorial donations, the Petrone Scholarship Fund, c/o Norwest Bank, 8500 W. Bowles Ave., Littleton, CO 80123
- Rachel Scott fund, donations may be made at Englewood Municipal Credit Union, 3400 S. Elati, Englewood, CO 80211.

In general

- The *Denver Rocky Mountain News* has established a memorial fund for victims of the Columbine High School tragedy. Send contributions to Columbine Memorial Fund, c/o the Jefferson Foundation, 809 Quail St., Building 1, Lakewood, CO 80215.
- The United Way has established a Healing Fund to support victims and their families as well as local violence-prevention programs and agencies. Send contributions to the Healing Fund, P.O. Box 46531, Denver, CO 80201.

FUNERALS

TODAY

WILLIAM DAVID SANDERS, 10 a.m., Trinity Christian Center, 6500 W. Coal Mine Ave.

CASSIE BERNALL, 11 a.m., West Bowles Community Church, 12325 W. Bowles Ave. Tributes: 8:30 to 10 a.m. Sunday at West Bowles Community Church, 12325 W. Bowles Ave.

LAUREN TOWNSEND, Noon, Foothills Bible Church, 6100 S. Devinney Way.

DANIEL ROHRBOUGH, 2 p.m., Grace Presbyterian Church, 251 E. Sterne Blvd.

TUESDAY

MATTHEW KECHTER, 10 a.m., St. Francis Cabrini Catholic Church, 6673 W. Chatfield Ave.

KYLE VELASQUEZ, 10:30 a.m., St. James Presbyterian Church, 3601 Belleview Ave. Visitation: 5 to 8 p.m. Monday at Drinkwine Family Mortuary, 999 W. Littleton Blvd.

COREY DePOOTER, 1:30 p.m., Trinity Christian Center, 6500 W. Coal Mine Ave.

WEDNESDAY

STEVEN CURNOW, 10 a.m., Trinity Christian Center, 6500 W. Coal Mine Ave.

THURSDAY

ISAIAH SHOELS, noon, Heritage Christian Center, 9495 E. Florida Ave. Visitation: Pipkin Mortuary, 2531 Ogden St.

Return to school spurs anxiety

Lingering threats create difficult choices for parents and students

By Brian Weber
News Education Writer

D.J. Wordell feels safe returning to Littleton's Goodard Middle School today.

His mom and dad don't.

D.J.'s brother, Josh, escaped after being trapped in a Columbine High School science room for three hours during Tuesday's rampage.

"He wants to go back," D.J. said. "My dad wants me to go to work with him, to stay around him to make sure I'm all right."

Families across the metro area are facing the same difficult choice. And they have decided to go on with life, and with learning, despite threats of more violence in metro area schools.

"I think about it a lot," Rich Forrest said at Sunday's memorial for the Columbine victims.

"But you can't let the fear overtake you," said the father of three from Lakewood. "You can't run from it."

Thousands of people have flooded the Jefferson County school district with offers to patrol hallways starting today.

They want to stand up to the threat allegedly made by one of the killers that more people would die today.

Police said they doubt the authenticity of the threat, but people want to help whether it's a hoax or not.

School leaders welcome them along with the additional security guards and police that will be on duty.

"It doesn't need to look like an armed camp," Superintendent Jane Hammond said. "It needs to look like a place where adults are supporting their children."

Volunteers can call a school's principal to help. Federal agents swept the Jeffco schools again over the weekend and said they were safe. The district has not considered installing metal detectors at schools, Hammond said.

"We feel like we can't have any threat and then close school," she said.

Columbine students will resume classes Thursday at nearby Chatfield High School. The school will run on a split schedule for the rest of the year: Chatfield students will go from 7 a.m. to 12:10 p.m. and Columbine students will go through the afternoon.

Other metro Denver school districts will heighten security all week. Inspectors went through schools over the weekend in Denver, Aurora, Cherry Creek and the Adams 12 district, which serves Northglenn, Federal Heights and parts of Westminster, Thornton and Broomfield. They found no bombs.

Parents and kids said they worry more bombs and bullets will come, though.

"We're scared for them," said Jeanine Vogel, mother of two from Englewood. "Tomorrow will probably be the scariest."

Jamie Bonasera said she wants some time off from Lakewood's Bear Creek High School.

"I don't think I feel safe there," she said.

She and her friends hung close together Sunday, smoking and weeping in the chilled air under gray skies. School offers as much security as fear, they said.

"It will be better to be with our friends," Katie Longmore said.

They have to go back, they said. That's where the best lesson of the murders will be learned, they said.

"I hope everyone will respect everyone more," Stephanie Brunette said.

Eileen Forrest is worried, too.

The murderers were smart kids but felt like outsiders. Her son, Blake, is smart, too. He's headed to Lakewood's Alameda High School next year. Things will probably be fine, but she still wonders about his safety.

"You try not to fret about it," she said.

Blake was philosophical. "It might happen again," he said. "Then again it might not."

Jeanine Vogel expressed a parent's philosophy for today or any day:

"We can't live in fear everyday but as a parent that's hard to do."

Staff writers Bernie Morson, Bill Scanlon and Joe Garner contributed to this report.

Dennis Schroeder/News Staff Photographer

Students from Denver's Kennedy High School carry a banner covered with messages into Sunday's memorial service in Jefferson County. Thousands have volunteered to patrol halls in schools starting today.

Elementary parents given option

By Hector Gutierrez
News Staff Writer

Stony Creek Elementary School administrators are letting parents decide for themselves whether to send their children to school today.

Many parents are worried because a school janitor told Jefferson County District officials that he encountered a suspicious young man last Monday, the day before the shootings at Columbine.

Law enforcement officers have not been able to confirm that the teen was Eric Harris or Dylan Klebold, but bomb squad experts have swept the school in the 7200 block of South Everett Street to make sure no explosives are hidden.

"Our custodian cannot definitely say it was one of the two," Principal Michael Connors said. "Our custodian told him to leave, and he didn't respond. He asked him twice and he didn't respond."

Late Sunday, Connors and several parents were calling families to assure them the campus is safe.

District security and local bomb squads have searched many of the district's schools over the last few days, sheriff's Deputy Troy Gardalen said.

The district has set up a hot line for parents, 303-982-9990.

Classroom will heal, Columbine teachers say

By Bill Scanlon
News Staff Writer

Columbine teachers who'll report to Chatfield High School Tuesday are ready — they say the classroom is a good place to heal.

The students need music back in their lives, and the teachers need the students back in theirs, said choir director Leland Andres, who has taught at Columbine since it opened in 1973.

Teachers will report to Chatfield High School Tuesday, two days before students begin class.

They know there will be tears, fears and anger. But they also say it's important to get back to normal.

Andres has talked to dozens of students since Tuesday. Many are still afraid, but most are adamant about wanting to reclaim their high school — if not this spring, then by August for sure.

Meantime, they'll share Chatfield, attending classes in the afternoon.

"The best thing for these kids is to get back to work, to get back to the routine," Andres said. "For the great majority of the kids, it's like falling off a horse. They want to get right back on it."

Andres and his son, assistant choir director Lee Andres Jr., hid about 90 students in the choir room and auditorium during Tuesday's terror that left 15 dead. All of those students got out safely.

During the terror, many students as well as the teachers were heroes, Lee said. Not only did they protect each other but they kept their heads. "They did exactly what we told them to do," he said.

He's not surprised.

"These are good kids, basically, with good families," said Lee Andres. "They're not perfect; the school isn't utopia. But when you ask them to do something, they don't get in your face. They do it. They might ask you why, but there's nothing wrong with that."

His father is ready to go back, and thinks most of the teachers are.

"Teaching is really a pleasant way to earn a living a great deal of the time," he said. "At Columbine, most of the kids are very kindhearted."

The gunmen, Dylan Klebold and Eric Harris, were both computer whizzes who would help work the sound boards and lights for the musicals, he said.

"They were good at it," he said. "They were easy to work with in those circumstances."

He remembers seeing them sniping with some jocks in the halls once or twice. "I knew they weren't happy with one another," Andres said. "I had no idea how deep-seated the resentment was. I never read it ever as anything that serious."

Andres said he loves his job because he enjoys the children as much as he enjoys the music. "I like being around kids," he said. "Kids are more honest than adults. You get straight answers from kids."

NOTEBOOK

2 teens arrested in bomb hoax

DOUGLAS COUNTY — Two 18-year-olds apparently intent on playing a senior prank were arrested for investigation of placing a fake explosive device at Highlands Ranch High School the morning of the Columbine tragedy.

Ben A. Bennett, a Highlands Ranch student, and Jonathan Reich, a former student, were arrested Saturday.

The device was found at 6:30 a.m. Tuesday. The Douglas County Sheriff's Department bomb squad determined it was a hoax. Investigators said there is no connection between the hoax and the Columbine shootings.

Jeffco schools back on schedule

Jefferson County schools will be open as usual today.

Columbine students will attend Chatfield High beginning April 29 on split sessions through the end of the school year, Jane Hammond, superintendent of Jefferson County public schools, said Saturday.

Columbine's graduation will be May 22 at Fiddler's Green Amphitheatre.

Douglas County schools will be operating on normal schedules beginning today, with law enforcement officers stationed at each middle and high school around-the-clock.

Counseling and mental health support will be available for any student or staff member who wishes it.

NOTEBOOK from **19A**

NRA Executive Vice President Wayne LaPierre said stepping up prosecutions of gun-law offenses was the best way to prevent school shootings.

Shootings spur push for funds

President Clinton said in his weekly radio address Saturday that he will seek $12 million for emergency teams "to help communities respond when tragedy strikes."

The attack at Columbine High was the seventh at schools around the country in two years.

Gun-control legislation the president is requesting would focus on keeping guns away from juveniles and providing money to help schools hire counselors and mentors and buy metal detectors.

Official issues 'copy cat' alert

Attorney General Ken Salazar issued an alert throughout Colorado on Friday about possible "copy cat" incidents of school violence.

"Given the horrific tragedy that Colorado is experiencing, we must not forget that we have more than a month of school left and more than half a million students still in school," Salazar wrote.

Salazar and Gov. Bill Owens also announced they will co-chair a statewide summit on youth violence this summer.

Banner missing from vigil found

A banner containing 4,500 signatures that was put up at a vigil last week at Denver's Civic Center Park wasn't stolen after all.

It vanished from the spot where it had been hanging during the vigil because Darren Scudder, 26, removed it for safe keeping after the vigil had ended and everyone had gone.

Staff writer Mike Patty and The Associated Press contributed to this report.

Letters express pain, offer encouragement

Kim Franke-Folstad

Those of us who live in Colorado are not alone in trying to understand what happened last week at Columbine High School.

The response from readers in the metro area and all over the world has been overwhelming and heartfelt. People out there are mostly saddened — but also disturbed and angered — by the deaths of 14 students and one teacher in the worst school shooting in our nation's history. Last week, they poured out their heartache and frustration in letters, phone calls and e-mail messages, some of which I felt should be shared.

Melinda Swartz of Laingsburg, Mich., wrote a long letter expressing her despair at the senselessness of the rampage, and offered these words of encouragement to the victims' families:

As young as they were, they have already created ripples in the pool of humanity, ever-widening and eternal. Throughout their lives, they have poured the unique essence of their being into those around them. Their existence has blessed friends and family members in ways that will forever change them and, because of the widening ripples, they in turn will touch the whole world.

George M. "Gunny" Fallon wrote about the cruelty those who are different must endure. He told the story of a young man who suffered a great deal because of what he experienced in high school. And he offered this advice to parents:

. . . go ahead, explain to your kids that violence is not the answer to unhappiness or for failure to be accepted by one's peers. Let them know that they can come to you with any problem at all. Let them know you can't fix everything for them, but you are willing and anxious to help them fix things themselves. But while you're at it, do your best to educate them about those facts of life that are so often overlooked: That there is no excuse for being cruel. You don't have to like everyone, but you don't have to be mean, either.

Chris Kniker of Douglas County, who has cerebral palsy, also wrote about tolerance:

The popular kids would laugh and I would be forced to sit and wonder why my own peers were so hurtful. Luckily, I learned that they were just as insecure as I was during my teen-age years and it took lashing out at me to make them feel better about who they were. Unfortunately, these two students, who have enraged me by their actions, did not come to that realization.

Michael R. McLaughlin asked this angry question:

If a welfare mother is accountable for the behavior of her juvenile "monsters," is a "nice" middle-class or upper-class family from a "nice" neighborhood who can afford to send their "nice" son to a "nice" school any less accountable?

And finally, **Jebbi Maguire** of Golden sent a poem she wrote the day of the tragedy, a portion of which reads:

Today it rains backwards,
a brilliant sky floods with tears.
Heaven help us
to speak with compassion,
to hear with understanding.
I believe in angels.
Columbine Angels,
those who will learn to survive
and those who collect tears in heaven.
My family was not there
and cannot begin to understand your pain,
but we will stay awake with you,
hold hands and pray with you
and share the tears of a nation with you.

Kim Franke-Folstad's column appears Sunday, Monday and Wednesday. (303) 892-5406 or

Mourners share sorrowful journey

By Rob Johnson
News Staff Writer

Mourners gather at a wreath Sunday at Clement Park. An estimated 70,000 people attended a service nearby for the 12 students and a teacher killed in the shootings Tuesday at Columbine High.

Marc Piscotty
News Staff Photographer

Suling Zhao's pilgrimage to Littleton was a journey that took him back to Tiananmen Square.

For his Sunday morning trip, he boarded an RTD Park-n-Ride shuttle on Hampden Avenue and claimed a seat near the front. Silently, parents and children walked past him and took their seats, too.

A television cameraman boarded, hurriedly scanned the riders through his viewfinder, then hopped off before the driver closed the door and rolled into traffic.

Zhao's fellow travelers were riding to a movie theater parking lot in the suburbs, and as the bus cruised through town, most passengers scanned the passing landscape, saying little. Several clutched bouquets, colorful blooms wrapped in transparent plastic, they planned to leave at the Littleton memorial service.

"It's beautiful out here," Zhao said, "but even this week, the sky has been crying."

William Mitchell, 12, rode next to Tony Serbousek, his youth minister, and Zhao listened as the boy across the aisle talked about the violence at Columbine High School.

"It's hard for me to comprehend," William said. And for a middle-schooler, the killings at Columbine make the thought of enrolling in high school just that much more intimidating.

"I've tried to talk to my little brother about the shootings," the youth said. But he doesn't think the 8-year-old pays it much mind. "I think he thinks it's normal."

The boy dropped into silence as the bus entered Littleton.

For Zhao, the trauma in Colorado hits him like a fist. Tiananmen Square has been on his mind lately, he said.

In 1989, he was 28 and standing with thousands of Chinese demonstrators. He said he was there when the students defiantly raised the Goddess of Democracy statue. But he wasn't there, days later, when the soldiers opened fire on the unarmed throng.

Now he's an engineer living in Denver, analyzing images and data for a firm that develops precision farming plans. And the shooting of more unarmed students, this time by teen-agers who apparently had enough time and wherewithal to design a home-brewed terrorist attack, leaves him wondering.

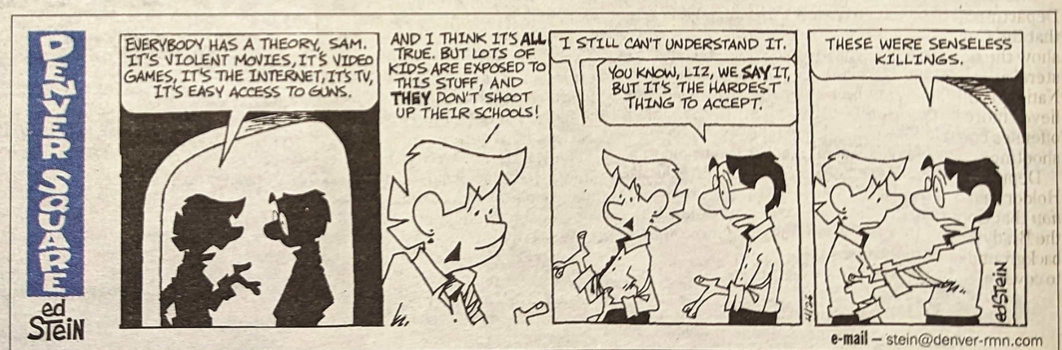
"Freedom certainly is good," Zhao said, choosing his words meticulously. "But when it goes out of control, this kind of thing can happen. I don't know what to say. I just share all of the people's grief. It is every emotional for myself."

Why, then, is it important for him to board a bus and join thousands of grief-stricken strangers in a giant shopping center parking lot in the center of Littleton?

"You have to go and stand up sometimes. You have go out with everyone and stand up to try to prevent these things from happening again," he said.

"It's very good to see people stand up."

And with that, the driver opened the doors and Zhao disappeared into the crowd, to stand with thousands of his fellow believers.


DENVER SQUARE
ed STEIN
EVERYBODY HAS A THEORY, SAM. IT'S VIOLENT MOVIES, IT'S VIDEO GAMES, IT'S THE INTERNET, IT'S TV, IT'S EASY ACCESS TO GUNS.
AND I THINK IT'S ALL TRUE. BUT LOTS OF KIDS ARE EXPOSED TO THIS STUFF, AND THEY DON'T SHOOT UP THEIR SCHOOLS!
I STILL CAN'T UNDERSTAND IT.
YOU KNOW, LIZ, WE SAY IT, BUT IT'S THE HARDEST THING TO ACCEPT.
THESE WERE SENSELESS KILLINGS.
4/26
edSTEIN

e-mail — stein@denver-rmn.com

Two words to SWAT officer: 'Thank you'

By Norm Clarke
News Staff Writer

His gripping televised struggle for survival has transformed Patrick Ireland into a symbol of the fighting spirit of Columbine High School.

But his heroic act of self-preservation — despite a paralyzed arm and leg and a bullet in his brain — is only half of Patrick's brave saga.

He was acting as a good Samaritan, ministering to wounded Makai Hall, when one of the killers, after walking away, turned back, spotted Patrick and shot him in the forehead.

"Patrick was holding pressure on Makai's leg wound when one of the killers came back to get him (Patrick)," said a source close to his family.

Almost two hours after being shot, a near-delirious Patrick, 17, summoned the strength to crawl across the library floor, pull himself up to the window and fall into the arms of two SWAT rescuers.

"Imagine what it took to do that, with one arm, one leg and the head wound," said a doctor at Centura St. Anthony Hospital Central.

None of the sources contacted spoke on the record out of deference to the Ireland family's wishes. The family has yet to confirm Patrick is the student saved in the dramatic SWAT mission.

The news keeps getting better for the determined youth, who remains in serious condition.

His speech, though still halting, has improved enough to allow him to deliver two sweet words to a member of the SWAT unit that arrived in the nick of time to catch him before he fell two stories from the school library.

"Thank . . . you," he said in a slow-motion voice.

Patrick got a souvenir SWAT pin from one of his rescuers, who told him how much his courage meant to them. The visitors included Sgt. George Hinkle, senior agent Donn Kraemer, Sgt. John Ramoniec and Loomis armored car driver Ronald Corzon.

Patrick's parents greeted the SWAT member with emotional embraces.

The mending boy has been seen smiling through tears, said one of dozens of well-wishers who have gone to his flower-filled room.

Schoolmate Makai, the student he stopped to help, has visited Patrick.

Patrick could be moved as quickly as Tuesday to a Denver acute care hospital, possibly Craig Hospital, where the likes of superheroes Christopher Reeve, Willie Shoemaker and Doak Walker have gone for rehab.

3 let curiosity get best of them

Teens were not acquaintances of Columbine gunmen, says young man arrested on live TV

By Burt Hubbard
News Staff Writer

A riveted nation watched Tuesday as heavily armed police descended on three teens dressed in black coats and boots near Columbine High.

While two gunmen shot students inside the school, the three teens were handcuffed as suspects.

Matthew Christianson and his two friends picked the wrong time to let their curiosity get the best of them.

"We were just three punks with a lot of curiosity," Christianson said.

Christianson, 18, said he and Matt Akard and Jim Branetti were driving around Denver when they heard about the shooting on the radio.

They decided to check it out in person. Christianson of Westminster said he once lived across the street from Columbine.

All three wore black jackets with black combat-style boots.

Christianson's jacket was adorned with swastikas with red lines through them and profane words directed against Nazis as a way to protest racism.

As Christianson and his friends walked across Clement Park toward the school, police cars and a golf cart full of heavily armed SWAT officers pulled out of nowhere and ordered the three to put their hands behind their heads.

"That's the scaredest I've ever been," he said.

When they were placed inside the police cars, one of the officers radioed that he had three suspects in custody, Christianson said.

They were driven to the command post where they were questioned for 45 minutes and tested for traces of powder before they were released, Christianson said.

The three were not acquaintances of the suspects, as police initially announced, he said.

He said he now understands why police stopped the three given the circumstances. But he thinks police overreacted and believes they were singled out for their attire and looks.

Christianson's tongue is pierced and he has a pony tail atop closely cropped hair.

But the day wasn't a total loss.

As he was leaving the area, he said a *Washington Post* reporter shoved $100 in $20 bills into his hand, asked to buy him a battery for his cellular phone and told him he could keep the change.

The battery cost $50.

"I figured I might as well make some money."

Steve Groer/News Staff Photographer

Matthew Christianson, 18, was questioned by police after he and two friends tried to get close to Columbine High School while the shootings were taking place.

Online friend didn't see evil side of Harris

By Burt Hubbard
News Staff Writer

Sarah Davis watched from 1,700 miles away the tragedy unfolding Tuesday at Columbine High School and wondered if her online buddy Eric Harris was one of the students shot.

Or if he was the one doing the shooting.

"Both possibilities crossed my mind. I had a gut feeling about it," Davis, 18, said Sunday. "I tried to call him for a long time, but couldn't get through."

Her parents told her the next day that Harris and Dylan Klebold had killed 13 people and wounded 21 before killing themselves.

Davis and Harris became friends in the sixth grade when Harris lived in Plattsburgh, N.Y. After the Harris family moved to Colorado about four years ago, they kept in touch, first by letters and later by e-mail.

The correspondence was typical teen chatter, Davis said.

He told her he and a friend were planning a road trip this summer and were going to stop in Plattsburgh to see his old friends. There was no mention of bombs or the Trench Coat Mafia, she said.

"Only once did I really get an e-mail that gave me a glimpse of the other side of him," she said. Davis can't remember exactly what was in the e-mail Harris sent about a year ago, only that it disturbed her.

The two grew apart in the past year. The last message was about a month ago. The last telephone call was about a year ago after Harris and Klebold were arrested for breaking into a car.

"I couldn't believe he would do it," Davis said. "He told me it wasn't something they had planned, it was just a spur of the moment thing."

Columbine students saw a more sinister side to Harris, Klebold and other members of the Trench Coat Mafia.

The first time Peter Maher rumbled with the Trench Coat Mafia, one member of the group brandished a shotgun. The second time, a member waved a knife.

Maher and his friends traded words last Fourth of July with Harris, Klebold and others from the Trench Coat Mafia in a convenience store parking lot.

"As we were driving away, I looked behind and one of them in trench coats had this big pistol-grip shotgun in the air," he said.

The two groups encountered one another later the same day at a fireworks stand. More words were exchanged and another member of the Trench Coat Mafia pulled a knife, Maher said.

At least one member of the group, Columbine student Chris Morris, has hired an attorney.

Staff writers Lynn Bartels and Jeff Kass contributed to this article.

Shops swamped with calls for columbines

Buyers seek blossoms honoring high school rocked by shootings

By Bart Sullivan
News Staff Writer

> *"It's a little too early. A lot have asked because it's the flower of Columbine High School."*
>
> — **Emma Lou Helling,** owner of Apricot Halves Flower Shop

It's a little too early for columbine.

Colorado's state flower isn't in season in April, but that hasn't stopped people from inundating local flower shops with requests.

The dainty buttercup that blooms in summer has become something of a symbol for vigilance and nonviolence in the days since the shooting at Columbine High School.

But they're pretty hard to come by.

"It's a little too early," said Emma Lou Helling, owner of Apricot Halves Flower Shop. "A lot have asked because it's the flower of Columbine High School."

Flower arrangements featuring ribbons in the school's colors, blue and silver, have been a hot item at the shop. But forget columbine.

"Even if we had the plants, they wouldn't be in bloom," said Jeanne Esters, general manager at Veldkamp's Flowers.

But seeds are selling briskly.

"We've had a lot of people call in because of last week," said Chery Dixon, office manager at Tagawa Florist and Garden Center. "We are donating (seeds) to the schools."

Packets are available at $1.29 in several colors. Now is an ideal time for planting.

SONG OF HOPE

Photos by Patrick Davison/News Staff Photographer

Two brothers who survived the Columbine High School shooting, Jonathan Cohen, 17, a junior, left, and Stephen Cohen, 18, a senior, sing *Friend of Mine,* a song they helped write, during Sunday's memorial service in Jefferson County .

The brothers said proceeds from sales of their CD will go to the victims' families.

Columbine, flower bloom, tenderly I sing to you.
Columbine, roseblood red, heartbreak overflow my head.
Columbine, flower bloom.
Columbine there's hope for you.
Columbine, friend of mine.
To your gain, on the mark.
With your love, love again.
Comfort, peace and sweet release come from you.
Where, it's true, I hide myself in you.
Can you still hear raging guns ending dreams of precious ones?
In God's sun, hope will come, his red stain will take our pain.
Columbine, friend of mine.
Peace will come to you in time.
Columbine, friend of mine.
Turn a page, to your gain.
Keep your heart on the mark.
Comfort us with your love.
Love again.
Christ of grace attend this place we look to you.
Honor you.
Fix you in our view.
Columbine, flower bloom.
Tenderly I sing to you.
Columbine, roseblood red, heartbreak overflows my head.
Columbine, friend of mine.
Peace will come to you in time.
Columbine, friend of mine.

A white dove soars into the slate-gray sky as Gov. Bill Owens reads the names of the 13 people slain at Columbine High School. An estimated 70,000 people attended Sunday's memorial service at the Bowles Crossing Shopping Center.

To all touched by this tragedy:

Our hearts are broken, our grief is eternal, our reverence for our collective suffering is total.

> *"It is one of the mysteries of our nature that a man, all unprepared, can receive a thunder-stroke like that and live... The intellect is stunned by the shock and but gropingly gathers the meaning of the words. The power to realize their full import is mercifully lacking."*
>
> \- Mark Twain's Autobiography
> (his thoughts upon hearing of the death of his child Suzy Clemens)

No more violence.
No more hate.

From the striking workers at Anheiser-Busch Denver Distribution Center, the 6,000 working men and women, and the Executive Board of Denver's **Teamsters Local 435**.

TRAGEDY AT COLUMBINE

HOSPITAL UPDATE

At Swedish Medical Center four wounded students remained hospitalized Sunday, but all continue to show improvement.

Richard Castaldo, 17, who is in fair condition with five gunshot wounds to the chest, back and arm, sat up in a chair for a time Sunday and watched the televised memorial service for the shooting victims.

Valeen Schnurr, 18, is in fair condition with shrapnel and bullet wounds to the chest, abdomen and arm. She is able to walk around the hospital and may be released today or Tuesday.

Anne Marie Hochhalter, 17, remains in serious condition in the critical care unit with a gunshot wound to the chest, but she has improved enough to be taken off a ventilator.

Sean Graves, 15, remained in fair condition with multiple gunshot wounds to the back and chest. But he has told doctors he wants to eat something other than cherry Popsicles.

Six other students remained in area hospitals:

DENVER HEALTH MEDICAL CENTER

Lance Kirklin, 16, remains in critical but stable condition Sunday in intensive care with multiple gunshot wounds to the face, chest and legs.

Lisa Kreutz, 18, was upgraded Sunday to fair condition with multiple gunshot wounds.

Jeanna Park, 18, remained in fair condition with gunshot wounds to lower extremities.

CENTURA ST. ANTHONY CENTRAL HOSPITAL

Kasey Ruegsegger, 17, remains in serious but stable condition with gunshot wounds.

Patrick Ireland, 17, upgraded Sunday to fair condition with gunshot wounds.

A 15-year-old boy whose parents have asked that his identity not be released was upgraded Sunday from serious to fair.

UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL

Mark Taylor, 16, upgraded from serious to fair with gunshot wounds to the chest, arm and leg.

Hal Stoelzle/News Staff Photographer

Columbine High School Principal Frank DeAngelis helps student Nick Foss, who was injured in a fall at the school, as they walk from the memorial service.

Wounded teen-ager has 'strong will,' father says

Rich Castaldo upgraded to fair condition, visited by friends and celebrities

By Mike Patty

News Staff Writer

Rich Castaldo is a young man with the courage and spirituality to overcome his physical and emotional wounds, and get on with his life, his father said Sunday.

"He's a kid with a lot of intestinal fortitude," Rick Castaldo said at Swedish Medical Center, where 17-year-old Rich continues to recover from five gunshot wounds to the chest, back and arms suffered in the Columbine shootings. "He has a very strong will and is very stubborn about what he believes in. He has the capacity to do anything."

Rich has been upgraded to fair condition and was able to sit up in a chair Sunday. He watched television news reports of the Columbine memorial service, his father said.

"His spirits are good. He's a lot stronger than I am."

Reports that his son is paralyzed are untrue, Castaldo said.

"The surgery went as well as can be expected," he said. "There were no spinal cord tears, although it may have been bruised. Rich asked about the extent of his injuries. We and the doctors have told him the truth."

Doctors have said that it is too early to tell if Rich will suffer permament problems from his injuries.

In the meantime, Rich is enjoying the visits and good wishes of his family and friends — even some friends he didn't know he had.

"Members of the Colorado Avalanche dropped by and gave him a hockey puck and some hats," his dad said.

Denver Bronco head coach Mike Shanahan, Colorado first lady Frances Owens and Lt. Gov. Joe Rogers also visited him.

"The first lady told Rich he could call her anytime if he just wanted to talk," Castaldo said.

Those aren't the only celebrities Rich has met in his young life. An active member of PeaceJam, an international peace foundation, Rich in 1997 met the Dalai Lama — the Tibetan spiritual leader of millions of Buddhists.

"The Dalai Lama reached out and took Richard's hands and kissed the tops of them," his father said. "The Dalai Lama told Richard he was special."

And the Columbine junior is special.

"He loves to play the tuba and saxophone," Castaldo said. "He is very active in his church, and likes math and science. He even talked to his chemistry and math teachers and asked them about homework. He is concerned about finishing the school year."

One of Rich's doctors asked the teen-ager the other day what he wants to do with his life.

"He said, 'I think I'll help kids like me,'" Castaldo said.

At 4 p.m. today , 1996 Nobel Peace Laureate Jose Ramos Horta will lead a prayer service in front of the Main Hall building at Regis University. The event is sponored by PeaceJam and Regis.

> *"God needed angels, that's what I'm telling my kids."*
> **Constance Acosta**

Muddy park now hallowed ground

Thousands bring gifts, flowers, prayers to makeshift shrine overlooking school

By Bartholomew Sullivan
News Staff Writer

Seven-year-old Veronica Underwood dropped a purple-and-white carnation at the foot of the 5-foot-high snow angel Sunday, then prayed "for all the people who died and all the people who were scared."

The Lakewood girl and her parents, her cousin Kayla and her grandmother joined tens of thousands at muddy Clement Park, which by virtue of tears and prayers has become hallowed ground.

Most who had come to hear the official memorial at nearby Bowles Crossing shopping center also made an emotional pilgrimage past the snow angel with its cardboard wings, then on to the beauty of a huge, radiant national shrine to end school violence. Most carried flowers.

"We just wanted to feel connected with the people out here," said Veronica's grandmother, Barbara Meinke, 47, of Arvada. "Maybe some of us can get a clue. Being here makes it more real and more obvious what has to be done."

Pat Belisle, 34, of Charlottesville, Va., cashed in frequent flier miles so he could come to Colorado to hold a private vigil Saturday night in an open-air concrete pavilion at Clement Park.

"I felt like I had to be here to add some positive, loving energy to the whole scene," he said.

Jane Haka, 35, of Sycamore, Ill., had already planned a trip to Colorado to visit John Tallitsch, 40, of Louisville. They decided to spend their Sunday listening to Vice President Al Gore speak at the memorial service and pondering the meaning of the Columbine tragedy.

As they stood against the steel barricades separating the park from the high school campus, they said the vast crowd gave them encouragement.

"I think everyone here wants it to stop," Haka said. "If this doesn't work," she added, with a sweeping gesture, "then there's really no hope.

"It's time to pay attention. Not just parents. Grandparents. You've got to nurture your children. Stop, and pay attention."

The messages at Clement Park were overwhelming. Amy DeLuzio, 20, of Westminster was touched by the Bible on the dashboard of victim John Tomlin's olive-drab Chevy pickup. The truck was festooned with messages, prayers — even a $1.69 packet of columbine seeds.

Messages from schools throughout the country were taped or tacked amid the thousands of bouquets. One hand-painted card said simply, "I am so sorry."

At the end of the memorial ceremony, Vicki Owens, 38, saw four fighter planes shriek over Columbine High. When one separated and soared off alone, orange flame trailing, she fell into Suzanne Bowman's arms and cried.

Owens is a manager of the trauma intensive-care unit at Denver Health Medical Center. She had been dealing with wounded students all week. The airplane maneuver "just tugged at my heart," she said. "It just makes your whole being collapse."

When Coco Burget, 41, of Littleton, questioned the need for Michael Corey, 39, to parade with a placard denouncing the National Rifle Association amid Sunday's mourners, heads turned, and the solemnity was — for a moment — broken.

That's when a 16-year-old from Brighton struck up an impromptu hymn based on lines from John 3:16 ("For God so loved the world. . ."). A dozen others joined him and within a few minutes, 300 people were singing *Amazing Grace*. The debate over gun control had ended.

Many parents and some students Sunday expressed fear for the future of America's schools. Sherri Carr, 35, who has two teenage daughters at Dakota Ridge High, said she and her children "are scared to death."

"It's hard for me to say they have to go to school when, as a mother, I'm afraid to send them," Carr said.

Marc Malezija, 17, of Heritage High, said his mother had told him to stay home from school today. "I'd never thought about being afraid to go to school before," he said.

Many who heard the vice president speak agreed with his admonition to take a more active interest in children's lives. But some questioned the reason he was even present, and others said they resented the high security afforded a politician amid the grieving.

Columbine freshman Don Arnold, wearing a Columbine wrestling T-shirt, said he didn't care about Gore, but he could not abide the remarks of the speaker, he didn't remember which one, who had exhorted the crowd to forgive shooters Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold.

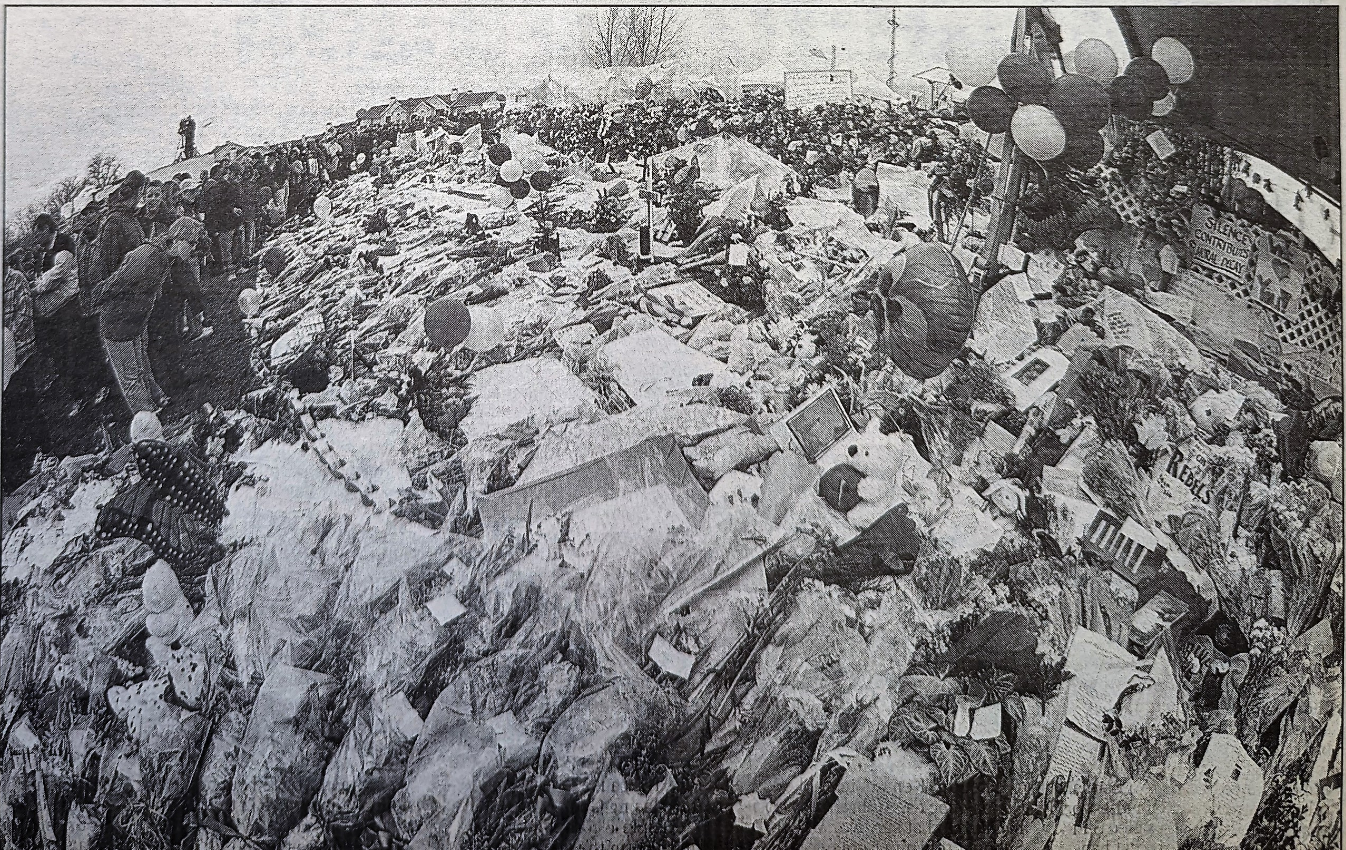
"He also said 'Love is stronger than death,' but I don't know what that means," Arnold said.

For Wayne Ramirez, 28, of Englewood, the speech making was too much, and he retreated to the relative peace and quiet of the makeshift memorials. He said he can't turn on the radio without bursting into tears.

"I get emotional just driving down the street," he said. "My wife's at home crying just watching it on TV."

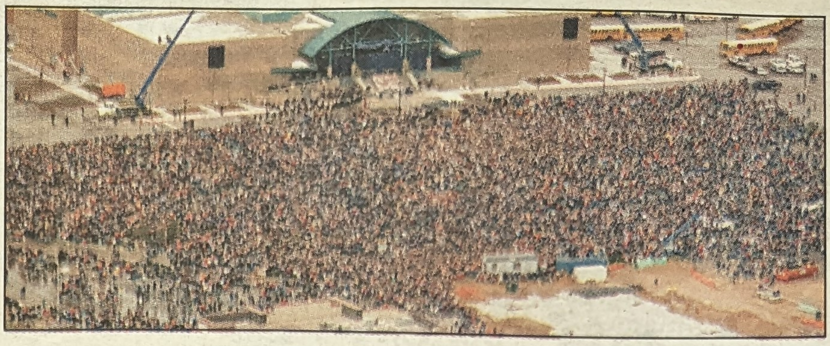
Some hid behind dark sunglasses on a cloudy day to talk about how they explain the horror to young children.

"God needed angels," said Constance Acosta, 43. "That's what I'm telling my kids."



A crowd gathers around the memorial at Clement Park Sunday. The collection of cards, flowers and other mementos grows daily.

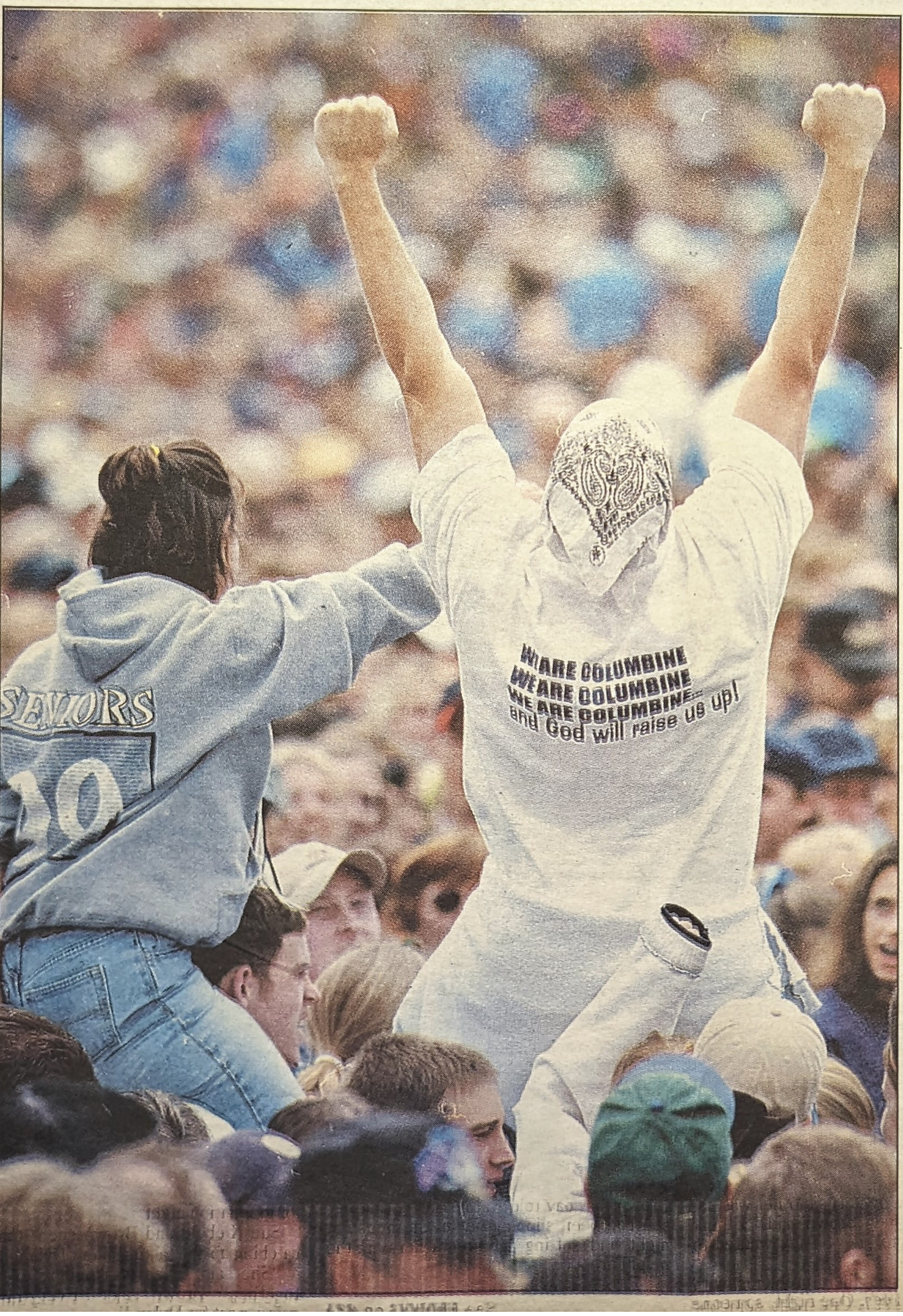
Glenn Asakawa / News Staff Photographer



More than 70,000 people gather Sunday at the memorial service at Bowles Crossing Shopping Center across from Clement Park.

Rodolfo Gonzalez/News Staff Photographer

TEARS, CHEERS AND PRAYERS


WE ARE COLUMBINE
WE ARE COLUMBINE
WE ARE COLUMBINE...
and God will raise us up!
SENIORS
10

Mark Piscotty/News Staff Photographer

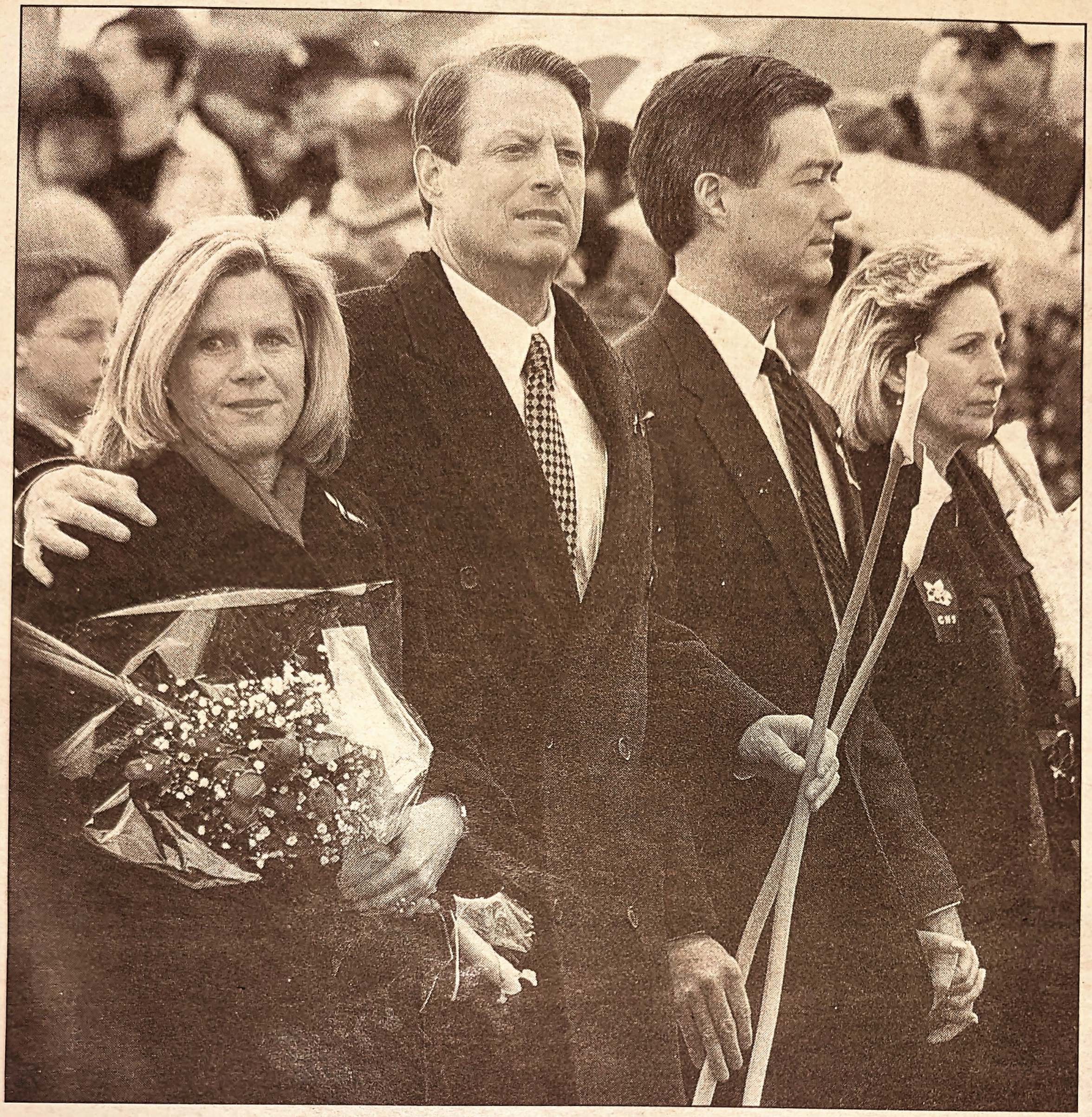
Fourteen-year-old Danielle Chavez, right, hugs her mother during the memorial service.

Patrick Davison/News Staff Photographer

Mourners raise their flowers to the sky.

A Columbine student pumps his fists in triumph at the Sunday memorial service. Vice President Al Gore and Gov. Bill Owens spoke to the crowd, and entertainers Amy Grant and Michael W. Smith sang.

Patrick Davison/News Staff Photographer



Vice President Al Gore and his wife, Tipper, left, walk with Gov. Bill Owens and wife, Frances, in a procession to Clement Park during Sunday's memorial service for the Columbine High School shooting victims.

Ken Papaleo
News Staff
Photographer

Sky weeps as thousands 'honor these children'

Vice president, governor join in remembrance of the slain Columbine High students

By Mike Anton

News Staff Writer

By the tens of thousands they came, clutching flowers and teddy bears, seeking God's guidance under a weeping sky.

They turned a suburban mall's parking lot into their church Sunday — more than 70,000 people, according to the Secret Service, twice the number expected, a crowd that flowed out into the streets and surrounding neighborhood.

A crowd that was utterly silent.

They came to share their suffering, and to lean on one another. To begin the healing, and to celebrate courage. And to pledge that Tuesday's deaths at Columbine High School were not in vain.

"What say we into the open muzzle of this tragedy, cocked and aimed at our hearts?" Vice President Al Gore asked.

"All of us must change our lives to honor these children. Somewhere in the reach of every adult in this country is a child to hold and teach, a child to save. We must teach them right from wrong. We must protect them from the violence and the cruelty in our popular culture.

"The human heart responds to goodness. I believe this. I wouldn't think life worth living if it were not so."

Jonathan and Stephen Cohen opened the memorial service in the Bowles Crossing Shopping Center with a song of hope the Columbine students helped write in the days after the massacre.

Columbine, friend of mine.
Peace will come to you in time.

It was a theme repeated again and again, a promise that wounds, fresh and raw now, one day will heal.

"Not only do I mourn with you, the entire nation mourns," the Rev. Franklin Graham said. "We cannot reverse the hand of destruction. But in your grief, I hope you can sense the arms of our nation reaching out to you.

"We ask, why? How can something like this happen? Why does God allow it? I don't have answers, friends. But I do know this: I do know that there is a God. He loves you. He cares for you. And one day he will bring justice and make all things right."

There were people in suits and ties, sweatshirts and ball caps, cowboy hats, even black T-shirts, black jeans and combat boots.

They started arriving hours in advance. Volunteers handed out lilies and roses. New Testaments and tissue. Thousands of blue and white balloons that eventually filled the slate gray sky with Columbine's colors.

At one point, a group of students began to chant.

"We are," they shouted, pep-rally style, and another group answered back, "Columbine!"

"We will stand with you shoulder to shoulder as you face your future," Gov. Bill Owens told them. "As we learn more about this, we learn how short of their goal the killers fell. Yes, they took far too many precious lives. But they failed in their goal of killing hundreds more and to burn the school to the ground.

"Behind you, scarred but still standing, is

See **COLUMBINE** on **42A**